

Trash Art



Objective

To encourage students to think about what kinds of materials they throw away.



Activity Description

Students will create art from collected pieces of home trash.



Materials Needed

- One copy of Parents' Note for each student
- One tarp or drop cloth
- Clean trash (brought in by students)
- Possible Art Supplies :
 - Three to four sheets of colored construction paper per student
 - Glue
 - Tape
 - Scissors
 - Markers or crayons
 - Glitter



Key Vocabulary Words

Waste
Product



Duration

1 hour



Skills Used

Observation/classification
Motor skills



Activity

Step 1: Photocopy and send students home with the Parents' Note, which asks them to help the students collect two pieces of "clean" trash for class the next day.

* if distance learning, the student s can utilize trash from their home, yard, playground, parking lot,etc.

Step 2: Lead students in a discussion of what trash is, where it comes from and how it ends up in the ocean.

Step 3: Lay a tarp on the floor and have the students sit in a circle around it. Ask them

to spread out their pieces of trash on the tarp. Go around the room and ask each student to describe what kind of trash they brought in.

If the trash was found outside, explore how students knew the item was trash and how they knew it didn't belong where they found it.

Encourage the students to compare and contrast how the trash might end up in the ocean.



social
studies



art

Step 4: Distribute the art supplies. The art exercise for this activity can be conducted in many different ways; below are a few age-specific suggestions:

- Have students make a trash rainbow by organizing the trash into rainbow colors. Students could draw the outline of the rainbow on the paper first, then paste their trash in the appropriate color band on the mural.
- Have students design a 3-D trash sculpture. Ask them to think about the color and shape of each trash item before gluing it onto the sculpture.
- Have students recreate their school mascot with the trash.



Assessment

1. Ask students to name three different items that they or their family members often throw away.
2. Have the students guess how many pieces of trash are on the class trash mural. Discuss with students that the mural is just a small amount of what gets thrown away every day in the world.



Enrichment

- After students have brought in pieces of trash, ask them to separate the items into the following categories: paper, metal, food, glass, plastic. Discuss whether these items need to be thrown away or whether they can be reused or recycled.
- Have students determine how much of each category of trash items they have collected. Draw a trash can on the chalkboard and have students come up and use a different color piece of chalk to make hash marks in the "trash can" for each type of trash item collected.

Parents' Note

Dear Parent,

Tomorrow we are undertaking an environmental education activity to learn more about how trash ends up in the ocean and its impacts. I have asked each student to bring in two pieces of "clean" trash for our trash mural. In the interest of safety and sanitation, I would appreciate your assistance in helping your child pick out two garbage items that are manageable in size and "clean" (no glass, jagged metal, food, or wet items). Good examples of "clean" trash include: a cereal box, empty soda can, paper, plastic bag, wrapping, packaging, plastic juice bottle, etc.

Thanks for your help!



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